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(56) Documents Cited

GB 2084848 A GB 0943736 A GB 0898235 A  
US 4350712 A

(58) Field of Search

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(54) Drip tray

(57) A drip tray or crumb catching device is disclosed for food products which are consumed on a stick, such as lollipops or ice creams. The drip tray 10 is attached to an ice cream or lollipop stick under the food product and comprises a flat or concave plate 12 extending radially outward from a stick engagement aperture 14. The stick engagement aperture maintains the drip tray orthogonal to the stick passing therethrough. Alternatively, the tray can be formed integrally with the stick. The tray may be made of plastics or cardboard, have raised lips 16 and 18 to contain the fallen material, be formed in shapes other than circular and can carry advertising.

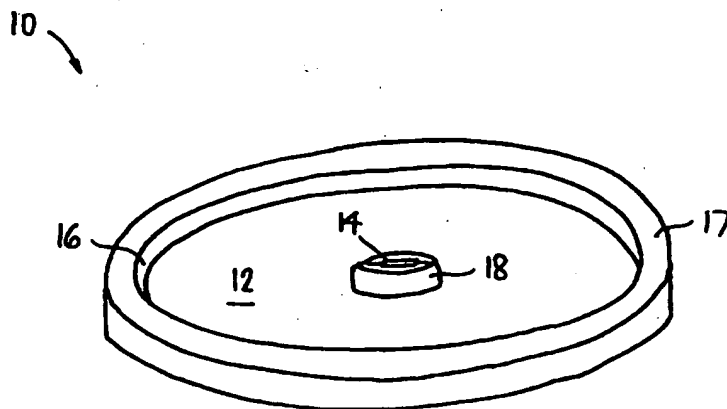


FIGURE 1

*Plastic  
cardboard*

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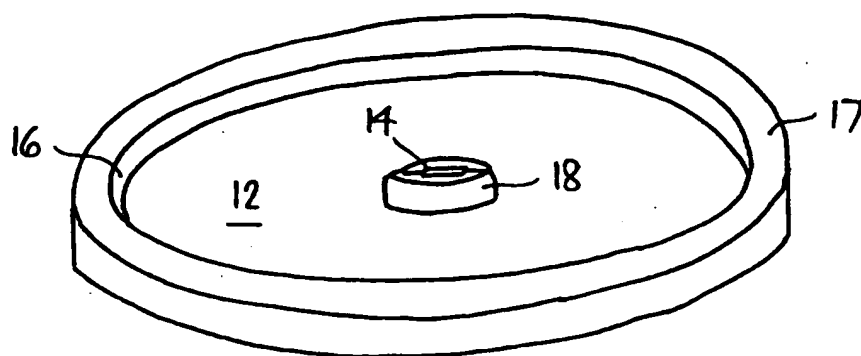


FIGURE 1

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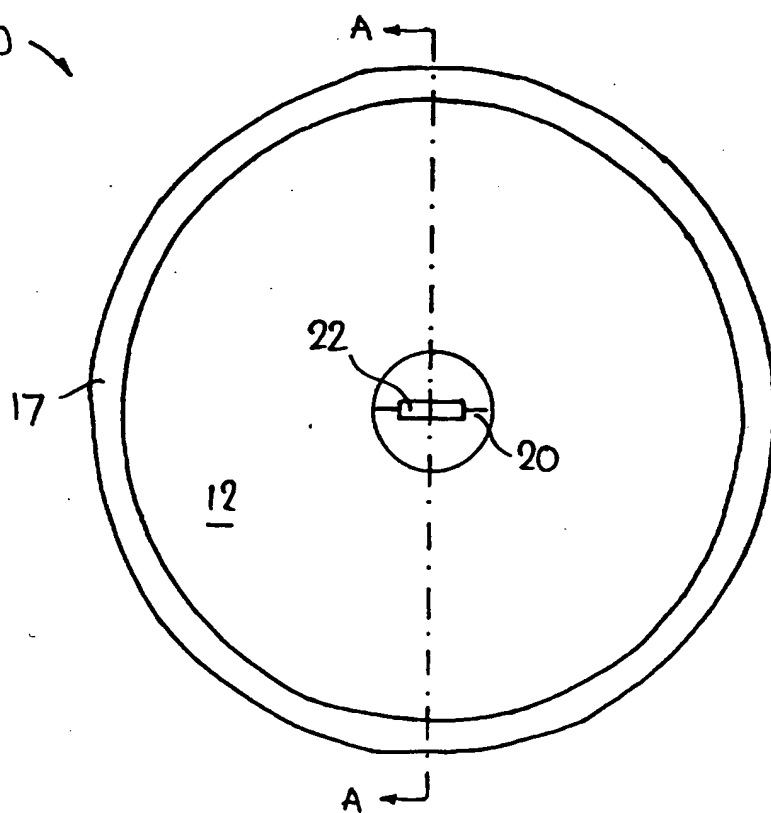


FIGURE 2

FIGURE 3

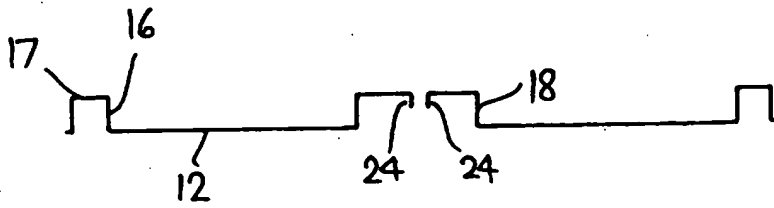


FIGURE 4

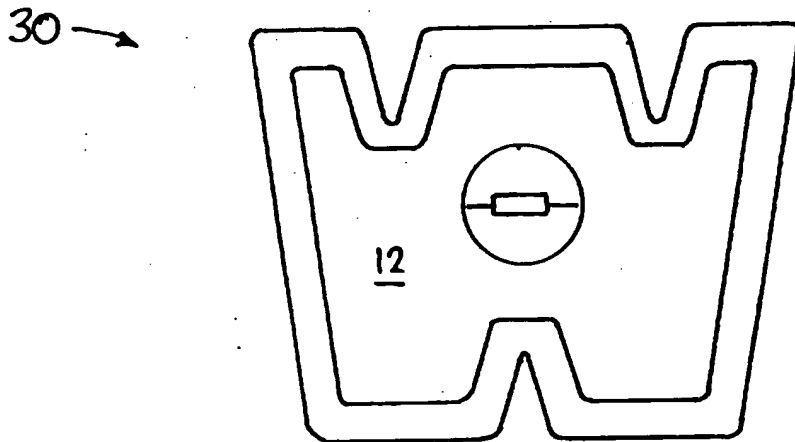
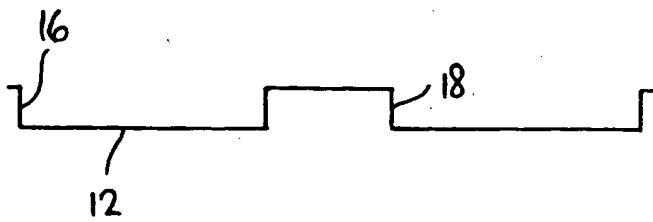


FIGURE 5



DRIP TRAY

5 The present invention relates to drip trays or crumb catching devices for food products, and in particular for food products which are sold on, and consumed from a stick.

10 Typically, foodstuffs such as ice cream, lollipops, toffee apples, candy floss and the like are sold for consumption from a hand-held stick, hereinafter generally referred to as a lollipop stick. In particular, such items are often sold in theatres, cinemas and the like for consumption on the premises and it is common for persons at such venues to be dressed in smart clothing on which they are particularly keen not to spill items of food. In particular, ice creams and lollipops have a messy habit of melting and dripping off the stick before the commodity has been entirely consumed. Additionally, the chocolate on products such as chocolate-coated ice creams inevitably fragments when bitten as it is maintained in a brittle state by the temperature of the underlying ice cream, and such fragments inevitably drop off the ice cream at some stage.

20 It would be highly desirable to have some convenient article to protect one's clothing from the spillage from such commodities. Typically, a serviette or handkerchief will only protect the lap of a person who is seated, and is not useful for protecting the upper body, nor is it of use when the user is standing.

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30 It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a protective device which prevents detached foodstuff from the stick-based commodity from falling onto the consumer, and which can be used whether seated or standing and without occupying another hand other than the one holding the stick. It is a further object to improve general hygiene

by avoiding the necessity of needing to lick messy fingers resulting from detached foodstuff, and also to protect the foodstuff from general accidental handling on the lower part of the stick.

5           In accordance with one embodiment, the present invention provides a drip tray for attachment to a lollipop stick, comprising a plate extending radially outward from a stick engagement aperture, the stick engagement aperture being adapted to maintain the drip tray substantially orthogonal to a stick passing therethrough.

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          In accordance with a further embodiment, the present invention provides a stick for a stick-based food commodity comprising:

          an upper portion for attachment of a foodstuff;

          a lower portion suitable for use as a hand grip;

15           a central portion extending radially outward in a plane orthogonal to the axis defined by the upper and lower portions.

          Embodiments of the present invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

20

          Figure 1 shows a perspective view of a preferred embodiment of a drip tray according to the present invention;

          Figure 2 shows a plan view of the drip tray of figure 1;

25

          Figure 3 shows a view of the cross section of the drip tray of figures 1 and 2, on line A—A;

          Figure 4 shows a plan view of an alternative drip tray incorporating  
30   a shaped periphery; and

Figure 5 shows a cross section similar to that of figure 3 but with modifications to the drip tray.

5      With reference to figure 1 there is shown an exemplary drip tray  
10      10 according to a presently preferred embodiment of the invention. A flat  
plate portion 12 extends radially outward from a stick-engaging aperture  
14 which allows passage of a lollipop stick or the like therethrough. The  
drip tray 10 is preferably manufactured from a suitably resilient material  
such that the aperture 14 can be made slightly undersize for an intended  
10      stick, and will thereby effect a tight fit with the stick when it is passed  
through. The plate portion 12 forms a surface on which advertising  
slogans or other graphic material may be printed.

15      The drip tray 10 preferably includes an outer raised lip 16 which  
will retain any foodstuff which has fallen off the lollipop or dripped down  
the stick. The raised lip 16 may have any convenient profile which  
provides the upstanding wall as shown, ie. additionally including a  
recurved or folded edge 17 which is provided to enhance the rigidity of  
the tray. An alternative profile is shown in figure 5.

20

25      The stick-engaging aperture is preferably located radially within an  
inner raised lip 18 which prevents any puddles of spilt liquid which have  
collected on the plate portion 12 from slowly seeping through any gaps  
between the edges of the aperture 14 and the lollipop stick passing  
therethrough.

Preferably the entire drip tray 10 may be very cheaply pressed out  
of plastics material or formed from cardboard or the like.

With reference to figures 2 and 3, the stick-engaging aperture 14 preferably comprises a slit 20 cut through the drip tray, and a rectangular section 22 cut out from the drip tray and extending along a part of the length of the slit 20. The rectangular section may be cut away completely, or the cut portion may be left attached to the tray at the sides to form two downwardly projecting stays 24 as shown in figure 3. These will assist in maintaining the drip tray in orthogonal relation to a stick passed through the aperture. The extension of the slit past the short edges of the rectangular aperture allows for larger lollipop sticks to be passed through if necessary, and will, in any case, provide four corners which will deflect slightly when the stick is passed through and grip the stick.

Alternatively, the stick-engaging aperture may be any suitable shape necessary to engage a particular type of stick cross-section.

The drip tray 10 may be circular in shape as shown in figures 1 to 3. Alternatively, to enhance any advertising slogans which may be printed on plate portion 12, it may be desirable to form a drip tray 30 in geometric, or more irregular shape, perhaps as an initial letter or logo of the advertiser; "W" for example, as shown in figure 4.

Although the drip tray 10 has been shown with a flat plate portion 12, it will be understood that a slightly concave upward surface could also be used. Thus, the term "plate" is to be interpreted to include a curved plate which has a concave upper surface. It will be understood that the outer raised lip could be formed by the concave upward periphery of the plate.

Although not limited to any specific dimensions, a preferred embodiment of the drip tray is approximately 75mm in diameter, with a

raised inner lip of approximately 14mm diameter with both inner and outer raised lips being approximately 5mm high. These dimensions give an advertisement area of approximately 30 cm<sup>2</sup>.

5        The drip tray is preferably manufactured as a separate item which may be sold or dispensed at the site of purchase of the lollipop. The consumer then unwraps the lollipop and slides the drip tray onto the stick from the bottom end thereof. The drip tray is slid up to the bottom of the foodstuff on the stick, and the stick is then held below the drip tray.

10

The invention may also be realised by forming an integral stick and drip tray.



## **CLAIMS**

1. A drip tray for attachment to a lollipop stick, comprising a plate  
extending radially outward from a stick engagement aperture, the stick  
5 engagement aperture being adapted to maintain the drip tray substantially  
orthogonal to a stick passing therethrough.
2. A drip tray according to claim 1 wherein the plate is substantially  
flat.
- 10 3. A drip tray according to claim 1 wherein the plate is concave  
upwards.
4. A drip tray according to claim 2 or claim 3 further including an  
15 outer raised lip proximal to or at the peripheral edge of the plate.
5. A drip tray according to claim 4 wherein the outer raised lip is  
continuous around the periphery of the plate.
- 20 6. A drip tray according to any one of claims 2 to 5 further including  
an inner raised lip proximal to or at the stick engagement aperture.
7. A drip tray according to claim 6 wherein the inner raised lip is  
continuous around the stick engagement aperture.
- 25 8. A drip tray according to any preceding claim wherein the periphery  
of the plate is substantially circular.
9. A drip tray according to any one of claims 1 to 7 wherein the plate  
30 has an irregular shaped periphery.

10. A drip tray according to any preceding claim wherein the stick engagement aperture comprises a slit cut through a central portion of the drip tray, the drip tray being manufactured from suitably resilient material to allow passage of a stick therethrough and to maintain a sufficiently tight grip thereon to support the weight of the drip tray.

11. A drip tray according to claim 10 wherein the slit includes a substantially rectangular hole extending along a part thereof.

12. A combination stick and drip tray for a stick-based food commodity comprising:

an upper portion for attachment of a foodstuff;

a lower portion suitable for use as a hand grip;

a central portion extending radially outward in a plane orthogonal

to the axis defined by the upper and lower portions which central portion provides a drip tray for the foodstuff.

13. A drip tray substantially as described herein with reference to the accompanying drawings.

<b>Patents Act 1977</b> <b>Examiner's report to the Comptroller under Section 17</b> <b>(The Search report)</b>	<b>Application number</b> <b>GB 9420314.8</b>
<b>Relevant Technical Fields</b>  (i) UK Cl (Ed.N)      A2B (BAAA, BAAX) A4A (AA, APA, APF, ATS) A4K (KGA) B8D (DSX5)  (ii) Int Cl (Ed.6)      A23G 9/00 A46B 15/00, 17/00, 17/08 B65D 1/34, 1/36  <b>Databases (see below)</b> (i) UK Patent Office collections of GB, EP, WO and US patent specifications.  (ii) ONLINE DATABASE: WPI	<b>Search Examiner</b> <b>MR N A FRANKLIN</b>  <b>Date of completion of Search</b> <b>11 JANUARY 1995</b>  <b>Documents considered relevant following a search in respect of Claims :-</b> <b>1 TO 13</b>

**Categories of documents**

<b>X:</b> Document indicating lack of novelty or of inventive step.	<b>P:</b> Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of the present application.
<b>Y:</b> Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of the same category.	<b>E:</b> Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of the present application.
<b>A:</b> Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.	<b>&amp;:</b> Member of the same patent family; corresponding document.

Category	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)
X	GB 2084846 A (M C SICILIANO) note page 1 lines 92 to 101	1, 2, 12
X	GB 943736 (J C L PHILLIPS) note Claim 1 and figures	1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 11
X	GB 898235 (E L COLLIER) note eg. upper portion 22, lower portion 14 and central portion 16 in Figure 4	12
X	US 4350712 (A KOCHARIAN) note entire document	1 to 5, 9, 12

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